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ELR Call for Papers: April 2012 Issue

Call for Manuscripts

Education Leadership Review, Volume 13, Number 1 (April 2012)

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- Assistant Editor, Gerard Babo, Seton Hall University
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Kladifko, R., Li, J., and Dunlap, J. (October 2011). The School Principal: A Tough Job with Few Takers

An ever-challenging and increasing dilemma facing schools is finding qualified individuals who are willing to take school leadership positions. This study extends the current literature by surveying 243 eligible candidates for school administrative positions to investigate the barriers to pursuing a school leadership position, and examine the effects of their background characteristics on their decisions to apply for a leadership position. The results of this study indicated that more than 57% of the participants did not plan to become school administrators. The top five rated barriers to pursuing a school leadership position were: satisfied with current role, don't feel prepared, family considerations and responsibilities, long hours required of administrators, and lack of support for new administrators. Logistic regression analysis revealed that age and gender were significant predictors. Implications for university leadership programs and potential questions for future research were discussed.

Education Education Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

NCPEA Education Leadership Review is a nationally refereed journal published two times a year, in Winter (April), and Fall (October) by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. **Editor: Kenneth Lane,** Southeastern Louisiana University; **Assistant Editor: Gerard Babo,** Seton Hall University; **Founding Editor: Theodore Creighton,** Virginia Tech.

Note: This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions

Content Commons, this module is published in the *Education Leadership Review,* Volume 12, Number 2 (October, 2011), ISSN 1532-0723. Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton and Brad Bizzell, Virginia Tech and Janet Tareilo, Stephen F. Austin State University.

Introduction

Developing and recruiting high-quality and aspiring school leaders has been recognized as one of the key strategies for improving schools and student learning, since numerous studies demonstrate the impact of effective principals on school culture, organization, teachers' beliefs and orientation to teaching, which in turn influences instructional practice which then influences student achievement (e.g., Wiley, 2001; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Heck & Hallinger, 2009). An ever-challenging and increasing dilemma facing school districts is finding qualified individuals who are willing to take school leadership positions. Research shows that there is no shortage of certified individuals to serve as school administrators, only a lack of willingness to apply for school leadership positions, especially in low-performing and low-SES (socioeconomic status) schools (Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Chung, & Ross, 2003; Kearney, 2010).

This study extends the current literature by investigating the barriers perceived by eligible candidates to pursuing a school leadership position, and examining the effects of eligible candidates' background characteristics (i.e., gender, age, race/ethnicity, sub-administrator status, and years of teaching experience) on their decisions to apply for a leadership position. There are two research questions guiding the study:

- What are the primary barriers that hinder eligible candidates from applying for a school leadership position?
- What eligible candidates' background characteristics (i.e., gender, age, race/ethnicity, sub-administrator status, and years of teaching experience) are associated with their pursuing a school leadership position?

Literature Review

Demand for School Administrators in California

California is facing several challenges to improve student learning and close the achievement gap, including the highest student-administrator ratio in the country, a large number of students who are English language learners and from low-income families, and a continuing demand for new administrators (EdSource, 2007; Darling-Hammond & Orphanos, 2007; Kearney, 2010).

According to a recent study (White, Fong, & Makkonen, 2010), more than 5,000 school administrators in California (37% of the total) were ages 51-60 and will reach a peak of retirement in the next 10 years; and the cumulative student enrollment will increase by about 1.7% during the period of 2008/09 – 2017/18. When the administrator retirements and student enrollments are combined, "the projected need for new school-site administrators ranges between 9 percent and 71 percent of counties' 2007/08 administrator workforce" (White et al., 2010, p. 1). Ten large counties in California will have a higher demand for school administrators (Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, Santa Clara, Sacramento, Alameda, Fresno, and Kern). They accounted for 73% of California's student enrollment in 2007/08, and will need more than 2,900 administrators in the next 10 years, "or 61 percent of the overall projected need of 4,815 hires statewide" (White et al., 2010, p. 11).

Demand versus Supply

It is getting more difficult for schools and districts to fill administrative vacancies (Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, 2009; Kearney, 2010). On the other hand, research indicates no evidence of a nation-wide shortage of certified candidates to be school administrators (Gates et al., 2003; Papa & Wyckoff, 2002). The same is true in California. As shown in Figure 1, the number of Administrative Services Credentials issued in California increased by 22.8 percent during the 5-year period of 2003/04 to

2007/08, and there are sufficient licensed administrators to fill projected openings (CCTC, 2009).

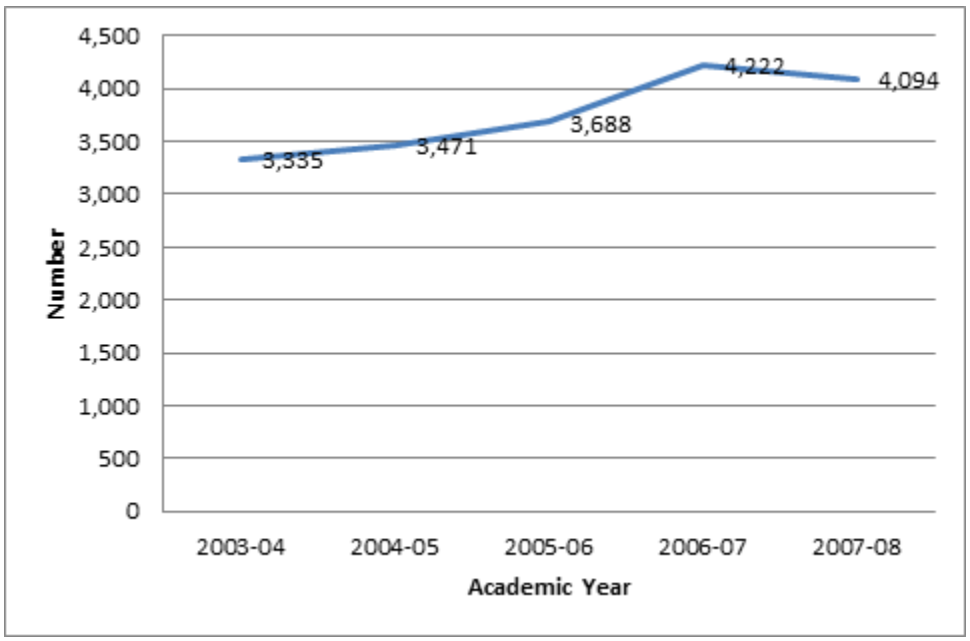

Figure 1. The number of Administrative Services Credentials issued in California from 2003-04 to 2007-08.

Why are we in the dilemma where there are seemingly sufficient candidates eligible for serving as administrators but there still exists a shortage of applicants for the job? Prior studies showed that many teachers pursuing an administrative credential were not seeking an administrative role. Levine's (2005) study revealed that many teachers enrolled in leadership programs did not intend to become administrators but were interested in advanced degrees or course credit for salary enhancement. Winter, Rinehart and Munoz (2002) conducted a survey of 194 certified individuals from a large school district; of whom, 71% had earned their certifications for more than five years. They found that "as few as 10 percent of the 194 certified personnel who participated in this research were likely to apply for principal vacancies" (Winter et al., 2002, p. 136). They also found that the primary barriers to pursuing a principalship included "lack of self-reported capability to do the job, and satisfaction with the current job" (Winter et al., 2002, p. 129).

Prior studies have identified several other factors or barriers that inhibit eligible individuals from becoming school leaders, including *stress of the job, long hours required at work, low pay or insufficient compensation, accountability mandates, disrespect from students, and difficulties with parents and other facets of society* (e.g., DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; ERS, 2000). In addition, Harris, Arnold, Lowery and Crocker (2000) found that *increased paperwork and threats of litigation* were also significant barriers.

Highly qualified teachers with an array of classroom and out-of-classroom experiences are the foundation for developing successful principals. To examine the interest of highly qualified teachers in becoming school principals, Hancock, Black and Bird (2006) used exploratory factor analysis and identified three underlying constructs or factors among 17 potential inhibitors that kept teachers from becoming school administrators: "(a) Insufficient Gain and /or Personal Benefits; (b) Personal Needs/Issues; and (c) Increased Risk" (p. 94). The specific inhibitors related to the first factor *insufficient gain and/or personal benefit* include the "salary differential too small, no tenure and lack of security, increased commitments, paperwork/bureaucracy" and "lack of autonomy"; the inhibitors related to the second factor *personal needs/ issues* include the "desire to relocate, concern for personal safety" and being "discouraged by family and friends"; the third factor *increased risk* includes inhibitors such as the "pressures from standardized tests, potential litigation, longer year, isolation/alienation from staff" and "discipline problems" (Hancock et al., 2006, p. 95).

The degree of school administrator shortage is varied depending on the locations and characteristics of schools. Rural schools, compared to urban ones, have smaller pools of principal applicants (Pijanowski, Hewitt & Brady, 2009). However, urban and academically low-performing schools are more likely to be lead by principals who have fewer years of leadership experience and who graduated from less competitive undergraduate colleges. Similar findings have been revealed in a more recent study of the distribution of principals across schools by Loeb, Kalogridge and Horng (2010). The authors concluded that "schools serving many low-income, non-White, and low achieving students have principals who have less

experience and less education and who attended less selective colleges" (Loeb et al., 2010, p. 205).

Method

Participants

In all, 243 graduating students from one of the largest university Administrative Services Credential Programs in California participated in this study. All participants were finishing their last semester of the program. Seventy percent of them were female; 69 percent were sub-administrators; and 61 percent were nonwhite. The majority of the participants (71%) were between 26 and 41 years of age, and the mean of years of teaching experience was 10.

Measures and Statistical Analyses

All participants completed a survey developed by the authors, which was based on the one used by Adams (1999), to measure participants' perceived barriers to pursuing school administrative positions. (see Appendix for a brief description and sample items). Participants were asked to indicate the reasons if they were not planning to apply for an administrative position after graduating from the program. They were also asked to provide their demographic information on the survey, such as race/ethnicity and years of teaching experience.

Two methodological strategies were used to answer the research questions. First, the frequencies and percentages responding to each of the possible reasons listed on the survey were used to determine the primary barriers that hinder eligible candidates from applying for a school leadership position. Second, logistic regression was used to estimate the likelihood of applying for a school administrative position based on individual background characteristics. Logistic regression is appropriate for the analysis since the dependent variable is a dichotomous variable, i.e., whether or not the graduating students would apply for an administrative

position. The independent variable included gender, age, race/ethnicity, sub-administrator status, and years of teaching experience.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the participants. As it shows, more than 57% of the participants did not plan to become school administrators. The top five rated barriers to pursuing a school leadership position were: *satisfied with current role, don't feel prepared, family considerations and responsibilities, long hours required of administrators,* and *lack of support for new administrators.*

Variable	Percent	Percent of "Applying"
Overall	100	42.5
Gender		
Male	30.2	56.9
Female	69.8	36.1
Age		
20-25	.8	0
26-30	23.0	26.4
31-36	34.7	35.1
37-41	12.6	64.3

42-46	9.2	55.0
47-51	7.1	57.1
52-60	10.9	60.9
>60	1.7	33.3
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	8.3	42.1
Pacific Islander/Filipino	2.5	16.7
White	39.0	45.1
Hispanic/Latino	39.8	42.7
Asian American	7.1	31.3
Native American	1.2	50.0
Other	2.1	60.0
Sub-administrator status		
Coordinator	19.8	26.7
Chair	64.7	49.0
Dean	7.2	77.8
Coach	1.2	0.0
Other	7.2	45.5
Years of teaching		

experience		
1-3	6.8	25.0
4-10	64.0	38.5
11-20	21.6	54.2
>20	7.6	60.0

Descriptive Statistics for the participants with background characteristics, N = 243

Table 2 presents the results of the logistic regression, including the odds ratio for each variable. When all five predictor variables were considered together, they significantly predicted whether or not a student would apply for an administrative position after graduation from the Administrative Services Credential Program, $\chi^2 = 22.04$, $df = 5$, $p < .001$. The odds ratio for age indicated that the odds of applying for an administrative position were increasingly greater as age increased. Since the odds ratio for gender was less than 1, female students were less likely than male students to apply for an administrative position. Conversely, the odds of male students applying for the job were 2.44 (1/.41) times higher than the odds of female students. The remaining variables (i.e., years of teaching experience, minority and sub-administrator status) were not significant predictors.

Variable	*B*	*SE*	*Odds Ratio*	*p*
Age	.26	.17	1.29	.042
Gender	-.89	.32	.41	.005

Teaching experience	.03	.03	1.03	.405
Minority	.25	.35	1.28	.483
Sub- administrator	.40	.32	1.49	.209
Constant	-1.344	.64	.26	.034

Logistic Regression Predicting Who Will Apply for an Administrative Position

Discussion

There is a continued demand for qualified individuals to fill new and vacant school administrative positions in California, but few eligible candidates are willing to take the job. Our study provides further insight into the barriers that hinder eligible candidates from pursuing school administrative positions and how individual background characteristics influence the candidates' decisions. The top two barriers identified by this study are consistent with the findings of a prior research (Winter et al., 2002): *satisfaction with the current job,* and *lack of self-reported capability to do the job.* Contrary to the prior research, this study showed that gender was a significant predictor and age had a positive impact. One possible explanation is that a large percentage of female (46%) participants in this study indicated the item "*family considerations and responsibilities"* as a barrier compared to male participants (12%). Also, the median age of the participants in the study by Winter et al. (2002) was 51, while the participants in our study were younger and 87.4% of them were 51 years old or under.

There are some implications of our findings for university leadership programs. One of these is the full consideration for more qualified, mature and experienced teachers in the process of recruitment and admissions. This is also supported by research in Virginia (DiPaola et al., 2003), in which 87% of the participating principals rated graduate school and teaching experience as the top two valuable experiences that helped them perform their jobs. Additionally, in investigating why some licensed individuals did

not hold an administrative position, DiPaola et al. (2003) reported that nearly one-half of the participating principals thought these individuals were a poor fit for the position “because of an inappropriate disposition” or “poor judgment or common sense” (p. 58).

Another implication is the reexamination and redesign of the key knowledge, skills and values for effective school leadership covered in the preparation programs because some of the graduates felt underprepared and unconfident to take on administrative challenges as evidenced by this study. The examination and design of the curriculum should be considered as an ongoing process since the student populations and school environments are constantly changing. It is equally important for us to look at other aspects of the process of principal preparation, including “the selection (or, more often, self-selection) of candidates, the pedagogy and delivery methods used in the course” and “the qualifications of the faculty” (Hassenpflug, 2011, p. 24).

The results of our study also raise some additional questions, including: Are eligible candidates more likely to pursue an administrative position if they graduated from more selective colleges? Do the university administrative preparation programs emphasize the key and relevant knowledge, skills and values for effective school leadership? How do we motivate and support eligible candidates to take school leadership positions? What are the special barriers that hinder female candidates from pursuing a school leadership position? More research and investigations are needed to answer all of these important questions.

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Litchka, P. (October 2011). A Vision of Excellence: Exemplary Leadership Practices of Principals from High Poverty, High Achieving Schools

Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002, much attention has focused on urban schools, where a great number of students are living in poverty and where the highest number of failing schools exists. In spite of a decade of efforts, a significant achievement gap between urban students and other students remains. In addition, urban districts are often more likely to face less resources, more leadership turnover, and difficulty in attracting and keeping highly qualified teachers than non-urban school districts. In spite of such obstacles, examples of urban schools having consistently high levels of student achievement continue to occur. Research suggests the leadership abilities of the principal can have a significant impact on the success of such schools in improving student achievement. This study examined the leadership abilities of principals in three high achieving, high poverty schools located within the same urban school district, as perceived by the principals themselves and their staffs. Using the conceptual framework of Kouzes and Posner (2001, 2003, 2007), this mixed-method study used surveys and interviews/focus groups to examine the leadership abilities of the principals. Results indicated that both the principals and their teachers perceived the visionary leadership of the principal as having the most impact on the culture of successful teaching and learning in these schools. The implication for educational leadership is the need to develop professional development programs for aspiring and practicing urban school principals that focus explicitly on how school leaders can, develop and implement a shared vision of learning that leads to excellence in teaching and student achievement.

Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

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Peter R. Litchka, Loyola University Maryland

Introduction

In 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was passed, ushering in an unprecedented era of accountability for public schools across America. The goal of NCLB was to have 100 percent of America's schoolchildren at or above proficiency in reading, mathematics and science by 2014, as measured by a series of formal assessments created by each of the states.

Recently, many states have reported significant increases in the achievement of students, based upon these assessments (Kober & Rentner, 2011; Ravitch, 2010). However, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2009), results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that student achievement in reading, mathematics and science has shown little improvement since 2002 (Rampey, Dion & Donahue, 2009; NCES, 2011). Similar results have been found from various international assessments, including the Program for International Student Assessment (Fleischman, Hopstick, Pelczar, & Shelley, 2010) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (Provasnik, Gonzales, & Miller, 2009).

Since the implementation of NCLB, urban schools have been the focus of much attention, since this is where a majority of students are living in poverty and where the highest number of "failing schools" exist (Ravitch, 2010). In spite of these efforts, a significant achievement gap still exits between urban students and other students. Furthermore, urban districts are more likely to have difficulty in attracting and keeping highly qualified teachers, and principals are often faced with leadership turnover, and fewer resources (Kozol, 2005; Clewell & Campbell, 2007). As Rebell and Wolfe suggest:

The cruel irony of the American education system is that low-income and minority children who come to school with the greatest educational deficits generally have the fewest resources and expertise devoted to their needs, and therefore the least opportunity to improve their futures (2008, p. 26).

In spite of such obstacles, there are examples of urban schools that are demonstrating significant improvement in student achievement. Researchers suggest that urban principals can have a significant impact on improving student achievement (Bryk, et al, 2010; Payzant, 2011; Smith, 2008). This study examines the leadership abilities of principals in three high achieving, high poverty schools located within the same urban setting.

Conceptual Framework

During the past decade, standards for school leadership have emerged, including the National Standards for Educational Leadership (CCSSO, 2008) and the Maryland Instructional

Leadership Framework (MSDE, 2005). Also, educational leadership organizations such as National Association of Elementary School Principals (2008), National Association of Secondary School Principals (2004), and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2008) have developed standards for principals.

A review of the literature offers compelling evidence that the leadership abilities of the school principal can be a factor in terms of improving student achievement (Cuban, 1998; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Murphy, 2005).

The research also suggests that urban school principals, faced with the far-reaching impact of student poverty are more likely to be managerial than instructional leaders (Cook, 2007; Cotton, 2003; Hemphill, 2000; Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). These principals are often forced into accepting scripted curricular programs, meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), use "one-size fits all" instructional programs, and have less autonomy than non-urban principals (Kozol, 2005; Ravitch, 2010). However, researchers have found a number of schools across the nation where principals in urban settings have led their schools to high levels of student achievement and academic excellence (Goodwin, 2010; NAESP, 2002; Smith, 2008). The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership abilities of principals from three high-achieving, high poverty schools within a single urban school district, and was conceptualized from the empirical investigations of Kouzes and Posner (2001, 2003, 2007), who identified the following practices of exemplary leaders:

1. Challenge the Process;
2. Inspire a Shared Vision;
3. Enable Others to Act;
4. Model the Way;
5. Encourage the Heart.

Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the data for this study. For the quantitative portion, the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (*LPI*, Kouzes & Posner, 2001) was used. This instrument has been used in more than 100 educational leadership research studies (Kouzes & Posner, 2009), and psychometric properties have been confirmed (Carless, 2002).

The survey consisted of 30 items, with each of the five leadership practices having six statements. Principals were asked to respond to each of 30 items beginning with, *as principal how often do you use the following leadership practice?* Teachers were asked, *how often does the principal of your school use the following leadership practice?* A ten-point Likert scale provided the participants the opportunity to indicate the degree to which they perceived the principal's use of the practice, with a range of (1) *Almost Never* to (10) *Almost Always*. Since each leadership practice had six items on the survey, with a scale of 1-10, the highest point total for a practice was 60. Means for each of the six practices among the principals and then among the teachers were determined for comparison purposes (Kouzes & Posner, 2001).

The qualitative portion of the study involved face-to-face interviews, both individually and in focus groups. Each principal was interviewed individually, while teachers were interviewed individually or in small groups. All teachers were invited to participate in either the interview or focus group. The questions used were based upon each of the identified exemplary leadership practices and corresponding commitments (2001). The researchers used open-ended questions during the interviews and focus groups (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009), and to allow for flexibility during the conversations, a semi-structured format was used as well (Patton, 2008). More than thirty hours of interviews were collected and analyzed by the primary researcher and a several colleagues, using both open coding and triangulation (Merriam, 2009).

Research Sample

Purposive sampling (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009) was used to select the schools for this study. The location of the study was a large urban school district in the Mid-Atlantic region, having approximately 200 schools and more than 85,000 students. Schools selected for the study met the following criteria:

1. Located within the geographic boundaries of a single urban school district;
2. Higher than average levels of student poverty than found in the district, measured by student participation in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program;
3. Similar student ethnic demographics as found within the school district;
4. Higher levels high levels of student achievement over a five year period, as compared to other schools within the district;

Six schools were identified as meeting the criteria. The researcher contacted each of the six principals to request participation in this study. Three of the principals agreed, two declined and one never responded. As shown in Table 1, the three schools selected were Barton Elementary Middle School, LaSalle Academy, an independent school for boys, and Pershing Charter School, a public charter school.

School Name [1]	Barton	LaSalle	Pershing
Grades	PreK-8	6-8	PreK-8
Enrollment (n)	253	74	204
Student Ethnicity (%)			
African-American	81.4	90.1	21.1

Hispanic	6.3	2.8	59.8
White	8.3	1.4	15.7
Other	4.0	5.6	3.4
Low Income Students (%)	96.0	85.6	87.8
Limited English Proficient (%)	12.3	0.0	48.6

School Demographic Data

[1] Pseudonyms

Student achievement in each of the schools showed both improvement and excellence during the selected five year period. Both Barton and Pershing showed dramatic gains in both reading and mathematics during this time, and both outperformed the district in the percentage of students at the proficiency and advanced levels. Similar results were found at LaSalle in reading, language arts and mathematics on nationally-normed assessments.

As shown in Table 2, the principals from the three schools offer a diverse demographic sample in terms of both personal demographics and professional preparation and experience.

	Barton	LaSalle	Pershing
Name of Principal[2]	Dr. Anne Banks	Matthew Thomas	Ethan Flynn
Gender	Female	Male	Male
Age	60	32	42
Ethnicity	African-American	White	White
Highest Degree	Ed.D.	M.A.	M.Ed.
Years in Education	38	10	20
Years in Present School	5	5	6

School Principal Demographics

[2] Pseudonyms

Results

A total of 48 teachers (80%) from the three schools completed the survey and 41 teachers (68.3%) participated in an interview or focus-group session. Principals from each of the schools participated in both the survey and interview.

Results from the surveys show that, of the five exemplary leadership practices, *Inspiring a Shared Vision*, was rated highest by both principals and teachers from the three schools, as shown in Table 3.

	Challenging the Process	Modeling the Way	Enabling Others to Act	Inspiring a Shared Vision	Encouraging the Heart
Principal Self-Rating (n=3)	48.00	50.03	51.30	54.30	49.70
Teachers' Rating (n=48)	47.04	49.02	49.81	51.38	47.82

LPI Results: Principal Self-Ratings and Teacher Mean Ratings of Exemplary Leadership Practices

Principals did rate themselves higher than the teachers did for each of the practices, but this is consistent with the literature regarding differences in self-ratings and observer ratings (Hazucha, Hezlett & Schneider, 1993; Sala & Dwight, 2002). Teacher ratings placed each of the principals in the “high” percentile ranking in the practices of *Inspiring a Shared Vision*, and in “high moderate” range for *Enabling Others to Act* and *Challenging the Process* (Kouzes & Posner, 2001).

Similar results were found in the qualitative portion of the study, suggesting that, of the five exemplary leadership practices, *Inspiring a Shared Vision* was a most critical practice used by the principal for school success. Both principals and teachers referred to visionary leadership in terms of phrases such as, “ journey”, “big picture”, “the direction”, and “ a vision of high expectations”. Teachers, in particular, suggested that while the other leadership practices were critical to the principal’s role in the success of the school, having the “big picture” [vision]

first and foremost allowed the principal to use the other four practices to support this vision.In terms of the context in which each of the schools operate, teachers felt strongly that visionary leadership allows a focus on very high expectations and achievement for students. As one teacher said,

If we didn't have a principal running with this picture [vision] of excellence all of the time, then who knows what we'd being doing. I think we'd be working hard, but we'd be going in all different directions…trying to survive daily but putting out fires. And proficiency is too low of a standard for us here…we aim for excellence! This picture of where we want to be really allows us to focus on excellence-and keep the other stuff out! And our principal does a great job reminding us about the vision and using it for making decisions and solving problems.

Discussion

Schools are very complex institutions and as such, the job of leading schools to high levels of academic achievement for students is a difficult and challenging job for a principal. Nowhere is this more evident than in urban schools. The job of the principal in such schools is considerably more difficult, as these principals often face fewer resources than their suburban counterparts, traditionally lower expectations for student achievement, and ever-increasing number of mandates and policies aimed at having their students only reach a level of proficiency. Despite these overwhelming odds, examples of urban principals leading their schools to excellence and success beyond test scores are being found throughout urban districts across America.

In this study, visionary leadership was found to be a significant practice of principals in high achieving, high poverty schools. In fact, the results of this research suggest strongly that visionary leadership can be the foundation for success of principals serving in this environment, as it provides the principal, staff, students and parents with a solid picture of what excellence can be. As one principal stated,

This was one of the first things we started when I arrived. Early on, I noticed some staff were disinterested, or just wanted to be left alone. But I felt strongly, that if we could imagine and define excellence, define excellence, we could use this as our foundation for excellence. Once we did, we used it for everything-and I mean everything! And from that, we as a school had a common ground for discussion and decision-making, all centered on the picture of excellence.

However, these findings do not imply that visionary leadership is the "magic bullet" for urban principal success. The other exemplary leadership practices are critically important as well. But, without the development, articulation and stewardship of a vision for school success, it would be most difficult to challenge the status quo, enable others to act, model the way, and

encourage the heart of teachers and students. Without the visionary leadership, the other practices may suffer, and thus so will the school.

Further studies of visionary leadership contribute to the understanding of successful principal leadership in urban settings. In particular, school districts and schools of education might consider visionary leadership as an initial strand for the leadership development for current and aspiring school principals. Having visionary leadership as a focal point of leadership development will encourage the urban school leaders of the future to contextualize this critical leadership practice into application at the school level.

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Hauser, L. (October 2011) To Practice from Theory Professional Learning Action Network: The PT Plan

This paper describes how knowledge generated from research was developed, applied, and effectively used in preK-12 public education via a professional learning model. The significance of this work is to better understand how to translate theory to every day practice and how analysis of good practice then drives theory. Understanding the high impact and useful professional learning approaches to convert research knowledge to leadership actions and build organization and instructional leadership capacity are essential for closing the knowing-doing and system-based gaps that significantly impact preK-12 students and the nation's economy. This paper presents one such professional learning model, to Practice from Theory Professional Learning Action Network (the PT PLAN).

Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

NCPEA Education Leadership Review is a nationally refereed journal published two times a year, in Winter (April), and Fall (October) by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. **Editor: Kenneth Lane,** Southeastern Louisiana University; **Assistant Editor: Gerard Babo,** Seton Hall University; **Founding Editor: Theodore Creighton,** Virginia Tech.

Note: This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this module is published in the *Education Leadership Review,* Volume 12, Number 2 (October, 2011), ISSN 1532-0723. Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton and Brad

Bizzell, Virginia Tech and Janet Tareilo, Stephen F. Austin State University.

Introduction

The effective use of education knowledge can accelerate and enhance nationwide efforts to eliminate achievement, proficiency and system-based gaps, but how do you go about converting research knowledge into every day practice? How can knowledge generated from research be developed, applied and effectively used in preK-12 public education?

This paper describes a promising professional learning model used to convert relevant education knowledge into every day practice and build instructional leadership and organization capacity. This model, *to* Practice *from* Theory Professional Learning Action Network (*the* PT PLAN) was developed to support and guide the transformational work of school districts in the central region of California. This work benefits practitioners and researchers in education and other organizations who are looking for an effective approach in converting theory to practice and advances our understanding of research knowledge transfer in education.

Theoretical Perspectives

The professional learning model used to convert research knowledge to practice was built on the theoretical underpinnings of knowledge utilization, closing the knowing-doing and system-based gaps, adult learning theory, communities of practice, skilled facilitation and coaching, and the use of quality processes and tools as an important leadership competency.

The literature is filled with varying and differing definitions of research dissemination and knowledge utilization. Many researchers distinguish between conceptual use of knowledge, which Huberman (1992) described as “changes in levels of knowledge, understanding, or attitude,” and instrumental use, “changes in behavior and practice” (p.6). For this paper, knowledge utilization means not only the dissemination of research

information, but also the integration of approaches designed to promote conceptual and instrumental use. The term “knowledge utilization” generally refers to the systematic application of professional wisdom and findings of high quality research to improve education outcomes for students. Knowledge utilization activities are typically dynamic and structured interaction among key stakeholders, including researchers, developers, disseminators, technical assistance providers, practitioners, and policy makers (Kohlmos & Joftus, 2005). Hutchinson and Huberman (1993) described a shift in the perspectives on knowledge use from one where the flow of knowledge is a one-way process purported in Havelock’s 1969 research-development-dissemination-evaluation model to the perspective where the user “acts upon information by relating it to existing knowledge, imposing meaning and organization on the experience and, in many cases, monitoring understanding throughout the process” and is viewed as “an active problem-solver and a constructor of his/her own knowledge, rather than as a more passive receptacle of information and expertise” (p. 2).

Additionally, there has been a major shift from thinking about knowledge residing with individuals to thinking about knowledge as embedded in a group or community. Intellectual communities play an important role in which practitioners do their work to profoundly improve outcomes for students. Senge (1990) specifically speaks to this point as he described the importance of “learning communities” as places “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (cited in Garvin, 1998, p.49). Wenger and Synder (2002) contended that knowledge is developed as people actively participate in practices of a social community such as a work team.

School systems must continuously improve and find new ways to significantly accelerate student learning. Before districts and schools can improve their capacity to help students learn, they must first become “learning organizations - skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying [their] behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights” (Garvin, 1998, p. 51). Transformational work requires large-scale

systems change where schools and districts learn from each other. Fullan (2006) refers to this as “lateral capacity building” and views it as “absolutely crucial for system reform” (p. 10).

The organizational form adopted as a core component of the professional learning model (PT PLAN) is what Wenger and Synder (2002) describe as *communities of practice*, networks of professionals that exist to develop members’ capacities, build and exchange knowledge, translate and transfer best practices, and solve “problems of practice.” Professional learning leadership practice communities were used as an approach to move beyond “pockets of excellence” within and across districts to create greater alignment, integration, consistency and coherence throughout systems. Wagner et al. (2006) describe these leadership practice communities as an approach for “developing individual leaders’ capacities and for generating higher performance throughout the system” (p. 77).

The PT PLAN addresses the challenges of knowing-doing and system-based gaps. As Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) espoused, just knowing is not enough - knowledge about how to enhance organizational performance must be converted into actions consistent with that knowledge.

Cornerstone to the professional learning model is the knowledge and use of adult learning theory, skilled coaching and facilitation, and quality processes and tools (Bens, 2005; Tague, 2005; Hargrove, 2003). The important points of adult learning theory noted by Speck (1996) and the National Staff Development Council’s (NSCD) Standards for Staff Development (revised 2001) provided the foundation for the selection, design, and delivery of professional learning processes, activities, and tools. Skillful facilitation and coaching is at the heart of *the* PT PLAN. The model draws upon the method of *masterful coaching* and the guiding ideas of *triple loop learning* (Hargrove, 2003). Facilitation and coaching competencies were central to building participant capacity and converting knowledge to action. A facilitative approach was adopted that focused not only on each participating member taking ownership for leading, but all members becoming skilled facilitators as well. Skillful facilitation was viewed as a core leadership competency (Bens, 2005).

Origin of the Professional Learning Model

The journey began with the award of a Fund for the Improvement of Education federal grant to a California-based non-profit support provider (Pivot Learning Partners [PLP] formerly known as Springboard Schools) in collaboration with the Central Valley Educational Leadership Institute (CVELI) at California State University, Fresno. Recognizing that districts in the central region of California have limited access to external support for improvement due to their isolated locations, small size, and generally tight budget constraints, the PLP/CVELI partnership focused on creating a comprehensive professional development opportunity that specifically targeted resource-poor districts that may be unable to afford such improvement without the economies of scale that the Network approach provides. The Central Valley Leadership Network (CVLN) was formed and this three-year project focused on developing, applying and using knowledge generated from research (Leadership Cycle: A Mental Model for Change) to advance transformational work in preK -12 public education.

Participants

Launched in 2008, the CVLN community of practice was a collaborative of five district leadership teams consisting of the superintendent, central office administrators, school site administrators (principals and vice-principals) and an external coach/facilitator per participating team working in concert with a Network coach/facilitator. District teams ranged from seven to eleven members. The superintendent selected participating members and determined team size, however, the size of the district influenced the availability of participating members. Team configuration changed over the three years as superintendents expanded the size of their teams including more site level leaders. By year three, 41 leadership team members from five districts, five external district coach/facilitators and one external Network coach facilitator comprised the Central Valley Leadership Network participants. The five districts serve approximately 30,000 students in the central region of California which is home to some one million children - 20% of the state’s total population - and has one of the highest concentrations of poor families in the country and many small

underfunded and underperforming schools, with few resources and economies of scale to support their improvement efforts.

Professional Learning Model - the PT PLAN: Six Inter-locking Components

The PT PLAN model provides educators at multiple levels of the system (school site to the central office) with a networked approach to high quality professional development and on-site coaching and skilled facilitation follow-up. The PLP/CVELI Partnership provided participating educators through PT PLAN access to the latest in research-based knowledge and practice and ongoing guidance and support to institute fundamental changes needed over the long-term in their districts. The partnership played a critical role in research knowledge utilization as external intermediaries, partner consultants.

The professional learning model (Figure 1) adheres to the NSDC Context Staff Development Standards in which (a) adults are organized into learning communities whose goals are aligned with the participating districts, (b) the primary focus is to build capacity of skillful leaders who guide continuous instructional and organizational improvement, and (c) resources are provided to support adult learning and collaboration.

Figure 1. ***Professional Learning Model***

Leadership Communities of Practice - Networks of Education Professionals	• Teams of school site/central office leaders led by the superintendent of each participating district in collaboration with an external skilled facilitator/coach and overall Network facilitator.
External Skilled Coach/Facilitators as Consultants and Partners	• Skilled external partners (experienced educators, administrators and non-district employees)

	• Coach/facilitator selected for each district serving as table facilitator/coach at all district Network sessions and as follow-up on-site partner. • Network coach who facilitates all district Network sessions and Coach/Facilitator community of practice.
Coach/Facilitator Community of Practice	• Collaboration of coach/facilitators meeting as a network of professionals to: • build and exchange knowledge of the research presented and its use, • build and refine facilitation/coaching knowledge and skills, • contribute to design and delivery of professional development modules based on district data (context and current state in moving to action), • communicate expectations of district facilitator/coaches, and • assess facilitator/coach needs.
Professional Development:Data-Driven, Training to Practice, Job-Embedded, and Follow-Up	• Interactive modules designed and delivered for all district Network and on-site follow-up sessions - designed as training to practice models. • Ongoing assessment of team progress and district team and coach/facilitator feedback used to inform subsequent module development.

	• Professional development focused on: • *building a knowledge base* where participants acquire new knowledge and information and build conceptual understanding, • *observing models and examples* where participants study examples in order to develop a practical understanding of the research, • *using quality processes and tools* where participants not only build individual knowledge and skills, but capacity to teach others, • *reflecting on practice* where participants analyze their individual and collective practice on the basis of new knowledge, • *changing practice* where participants translate their new knowledge into individual and collaborative plans and actions for instructional and organizational change for improvement, and • *gaining and sharing expertise* where participants continue to refine their practice, learn from internal and external system colleagues while also sharing practical wisdom with their colleagues.
On-line Learning Community: Extended Support and	• Interactive website to extend participant learning:

Communication with Colleagues	• *Resource Library*: Electronic access to all modules, resources, protocols, and tools. • *Discussion Board*: Tool to share resources and engage in ongoing timely dialogue with colleagues. • *Ask Your Partners*: On-line Q & A system to pose burning questions related to areas such as network content while receiving timely answers.
Monitoring and Evaluation	• On-going evaluation of professional development context, process, and content. • Use of multiple data sources and data collection methods. • Data turned into information to guide improvement, inform next step module design and delivery, and demonstrate impact.

The six interlocking PT PLAN components

Lessons Learned

Based on findings derived from an array and comprehensive set of monitoring and evaluation instruments and methods used to collect data over the course of the journey and implementation of PT PLAN, the following are lessons learned:

Team Development

- 1. In order to shift from working in isolation to working collaboratively, individuals must understand how effective teams operate. Teamwork skills need to be developed and practiced.
- 2. Don’t underestimate the importance of team development. Before districts optimized the value and benefits of inter/between district sharing, districts needed to focus internally first, working to develop their group into a team. Districts that more quickly began to function like a team accelerated their growth and development and the positive direction and movement of their work.

Skilled Facilitation and Coaching: Key Component

- 3. Skilled facilitation and differentiating between content and process is an important leadership competency for building organization and instructional leadership capacity.
- 4. The external facilitator/coach component was essential for supporting participating members and district teams in building organization and instructional leadership capacity, accelerating positive change, and transferring research knowledge to practice.
- 5. The knowledge, skills and personal attributes of the coach/facilitator were critical to accelerating the development and growth of district teams. Capacity building of coach/facilitators was vital to maximize progress of all district network and on-site work.
- 6. Selecting the right coach/facilitators and providing them with quality and continued support was critical. The knowledge, skills and dispositions of a coach/facilitator significantly impact the growth, development and forward leadership motion of individuals and the team. On-going professional learning opportunities through skillful facilitation training and participation in a coach/facilitator community of practice was key.

Explicit and Tacit Knowledge

- 7. Effective application of “explicit knowledge” derived from research also requires tacit knowledge. Having access to and using external research is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for practitioners to improve the quality of their organizations (Wenger, McDermonott, and Synder, 2002). Although the Leadership Cycle research provided a framework for district transformational work, it was limited in addressing the tacit knowledge that is vital for successful transformation. Since the effective application of the “explicit knowledge” requires tacit knowledge, the learning processes used within the professional learning model such as storytelling, skillfully facilitated dialogue and conversation, context mapping, action learning labs, learning fairs, and coaching set in the context of leadership practice communities were paramount for converting knowledge research to practice.

Reflection, Effective Feedback and Accountability

- 8. Opportunities and processes for individual, collective district team, and network reflection and effective feedback were highly valued and important to both individual and organization growth and development.
- 9. As district leadership teams began to internalize a common framework for leading change and continuous improvement (Leadership Cycle), administrators began to integrate their functional, day-to-day work with the deeper, transformational work necessary to lead reform efforts and change district cultures.

Summary and Significance

Evidence suggests that what happens in school systems matters, and quality practices at all levels of the system profoundly impacts student achievement. American education is filled with instances in which students with similar backgrounds and traits achieve very different results. Educator proficiency is an absolute requirement for student proficiency, and the extent to which society develops and uses its human capacity is a chief

determinant of its prosperity (Auguste, Hancock, & Laboissiere, 2009). So often compelling and promising knowledge research remains compelling only on paper - never really utilized, never converted to action or change in practice. Understanding the professional learning approaches that are high impact and useful in converting knowledge to leadership actions and building organization and instructional leadership capacity are essential to closing the knowing-doing and system-based gaps that significantly impact students' life chances and the nation's economy. This paper presented one promising professional learning model, *to* Practice *from* Theory Professional Learning Action Network (*the* PT PLAN).

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Taylor, R., Touchton, D., & Acker-Hocevar, M. (October 2011). Principals' Decision-making: The Influences of Accountability

Decision-making of principals after implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 responded to accountability for all students learning. The focus on equity and access reflected concerns about social justice mentioned throughout 13 focus groups held with 82 principals across the United States from 2002-2005. Two consistent decision-making themes were identified: factors that affect decision-making and leadership in decision-making. The authors conclude that principals need to develop expertise in shared decision-making and communicate the processes to stakeholders for more effective decision-making to improve student learning.

Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

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Principals' Decision-Making: The Influence of Accountability

After implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) sponsored national superintendent and principal focus group research, Voices 3, from 2002 through 2005. This article addressed findings related to principals' decision-making post NCLB. Authors found two consistent decision-making themes: factors that affected decision-making and leadership in decision-making. Principals' common commitment to doing what was best for students' learning guided their decision-making behaviors.

Conceptual Framework

Principals' work is characterized by ambiguity, fast pace, and a constant stream of decisions (Weick, 1983). They are judging, thinking, and making decisions as they go about their daily work (Weick, 1983). Decisions are often intuitive or come from skills developed in context (Schön, 1983). Shared decision-making has been recognized as having benefits for better outcomes, better decision implementation, and a higher level of commitment. However, the choice about whether to give others a voice is in the hands of the leaders (Schoorman & Acker-Hocevar, 2010). Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) provided a continuum for a principal's decision-making which recognized the value of participation and challenges in determining the level of shared decision-making—knowledge of the issue and time required. The Vroom and Yetton (1973) leadership style model depicted behaviors in decision-making from autocratic to participatory; the revised model assisted leaders in selecting the best strategy for a given context (Vroom, Yetton, & Jago, 1988).

New models of shared decision-making emerged since 2001 which provided specific structures for implementation. Researchers at the Center for Research in Educational Policy at the University of Memphis developed the Total Teamwork System (TTS), based on Vroom and Yetton's original model. When teams used TTS the decisions were more acceptable. When not used, negative attributions were generated (Valesky, Horgan, Caughey, & Smith, 2003). Kepner-Tregoe (2004) emphasized that correctly identifying the problem to be addressed as an essential first step prior to

data gathering, problem analysis, and solution generation. Another model published since 2001 is the synergistic decision-making model which focused on the need for communication skills: listening, responding, clarifying, and reinforcing-- all of which are necessary to facilitate shared decision-making (Lambert, 2004).

Methodology

Using the same procedures and questions, 13 researchers and moderators led 13 focus groups from 2004 through 2006. Leadership questions around democratic community, school improvement, and social justice queried leaders concerning their practices and perceptions (Murphy, 2002). Each session's protocol began with building rapport and asking questions, followed by summaries of key points (see Krueger & Casey, 2000). Recordings were made of the proceedings and transcribed verbatim.

Each of the three authors independently read all focus group transcripts (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) noting participant comments, strands of thinking, and examples. Independent reading and analyses preceded conference calls to arrive at themes. After several cycles of rereading, coding, analyses, and conferencing, two themes emerged. A constant comparison method (Patton, 1990), the final step, aligned principal statements with the themes.

Participants were 82 principals from small and medium sized school districts with none having more than 9,999 students. Principals represented a convenience sample, accessible to the researchers, who agreed to participate with their identity remaining confidential. The typical size of the focus groups was five to seven principals. Schools ranged in enrollment from under 500 to almost 2500. Grade level configurations differed and five schools served students from prekindergarten through twelfth grades.

Findings

Theme 1: Factors that Affect Decision-making

Communication is an important factor in the decision-making process. While principals voiced that communication of decision-making processes and outcomes was important for developing and maintaining trust, they did not share specific mechanisms for doing so. As an example, none identified email blasts, web pages, phone systems, blogs, town meetings, etc., as specific ways of sharing important content and processes of decisions. Elementary Principal 41 (Southwest/West, 10/11/2005) suggested the need, "…to have established avenues for the communication…" High School Principal 83 (Midwest, 6/18/2006) expressed that she shared how decisions are to be made, "…there has to be a communication on what is the method of decision that is going to being [*sic*] used. …"

Impact was a factor in deciding on the decision-making approach. When decisions would have life impacting results for students, such as being arrested or not receiving a high school diploma, they personally made the decision without input. Principals' perceptions that for students' best interest to be fairly represented they had to make high impact decisions were reflected in the statement, "People believe that magically as ninth graders they should be responsible" (Midwest High School Principal 83, 6/18/2006).

Another important factor was that stakeholders want a voice—but may not want to make the decision. "They really want to be sure that they're heard and listened to. It doesn't mean that necessarily they [*sic*] want to make the decisions," (Midwest Middle School Principal 73, 1/19/2006). A middle school principal suggested that in giving opportunities for input, there should be accountability to do what is best for students, rather than accountability for the result to be held solely by the principal.

While some want voice, others do not participate. Midwest Elementary Principal 57 (6/2/2006) perceived that teachers were either unwilling or did not have the knowledge or skills to collaborate. Southwest Elementary Principal 33, 1/3/2006 said, "… I have to educate and convince all the stakeholders that the vision that I have as the hired instructional leader is the right vision which affects almost every decision that I make. …We spend a lot of time talking about, What is consensus [*sic*]."

A challenging factor was the lack of commitment of time as Middle School Principal 71 became aware in a surprising encounter with a 35 year veteran teacher, “She stopped me mid stream of the discussion and she said “As a building leader, I need you to tell me what to do, ok?” (1/19/2006). Teachers may believe that decision-making is the principal’s role. “We have a lot of opportunities for shared decision-making. What we found, … the teachers really don’t have the time, and so, if you plan meetings for them to get their input, there are a lot of times when they will say, just do it,” (Southeast Elementary Principal 20, 5/27/2005). At times principals also made a decision *not* to take teachers out of class for decision-making. Southeast Elementary Principal 21 (5/27/2005) indicated, “but you don’t have a teacher in the classroom doing what they really need to be doing, teaching the children.”

Theme 2: Leadership Decision-making

If stakeholders are to be involved, they want to know what decisions are to be made and how their input will be used (Midwest K-8 School Principal 70, 1/19/2006). High school principals expressed that stakeholders want to be involved if the decision affects them. This belief was stated by Midwest High School Principal 77 (10/17/2005)

… most people want to be involved because they want to feel some ownership in the process, they want to have some buy-in. If they have that, they’re more likely to give you their best effort than if it just comes out and you say this is what we’re going to do.

Listening to others gives a variety of perspectives on how to resolve problems. “…there are many ways to solve any given issue. ….So, I think that it is important to hear their voices,” (High School Principal 83, 6/18/2006). In referring to historically unheard parents, Southwest Elementary Principal 52 (6/8/2006) equated the lack of voice with lack of power. “ ..those parents will not speak up, you know, maybe that don’t feel they have a voice or—or they….—feel powerless”

Examples of shared decision-making that included parents, faculty and students were related to decisions which impacted the entire school. Implementation of block scheduling and seeking input on the best way to be successful on state accountability assessments were cited as successful shared decision-making experiences.

...parents, staff members—certified and classified and students are part of that give and take… if you're going to do something that's going to affect everybody's lives, they need to have some ownership and opportunity to be a part of constructing that, and so kids are heavily involved… (Midwest High School Principal 75, 10/17/2005)

Principals' belief that they were in the middle between school level stakeholders and the district office and superintendent influenced their decision-making. They also desired to be included in the superintendent and district level decision-making process.

…we as building principals, are on both sides …hit from both directions... One is staff members or those that we supervise or are responsible for are asking for more ownership in decisions or more participation in them and we in turn are asking those above us to allow us to be more a part of those decisions that really matter. I don't think any group of people would understand the full ramifications of that issue better than building principals, because they are truly in the middle (Midwest School Principal 75, 10/17/2005).

Midwest High School Principal 80 (6/18/2006) was even more explicit as he detailed his perception and how he advised those preparing for administration to be cautious of being perceived by the district office of not being supportive or of teachers' perception of not inviting input. Although in the middle, principals equated the trust of the superintendent with opportunities to provide input and the reciprocal trust represented support of principals' decisions. "District support equals trust," (Southwest Elementary Principal 33, 1/3/2006). "Relationships with superintendents

build trust in your decisions," (Southwest Elementary Principal 41, 10/11/2005).

Discussion

Knowledge and skills in decision-making and communication are essential to successfully lead change in schools to improve learning for all students. Creation and implementation of new mental models of schooling can serve all students at a high level and become a reality if principals have the knowledge and skills in decision-making, communication, and empowerment to create a school culture for change. Such change has the potential to lead to equity and access to excellence for all students regardless of family background or economic status, leading to social and professional opportunities (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009).

Although principals voiced support for shared decision-making, they did not accurately articulate specific processes. When a specific strategy was mentioned, like consensus building, the description was not accurate for the term. The lack of accuracy and facility with discussion of shared decision-making led the researchers to conclude that principals lack knowledge, skills, and implementation processes of successful and effective decision-making models. If specific decision-making processes are practiced with stakeholders, leadership skills and capacity can develop among leaders and stakeholders, to increase decision-making outcomes and effectiveness of outcome implementation.

Conclusions

In principals' daily practice decision-making processes should be explicit. If the principal does not have consistent decision-making practices communicated clearly, then stakeholders cannot fully participate, decisions may not be accepted, and hence not successfully implemented (Valesky, Horgan, Caughey, & Smith, 2003). In contrast to the principals in this study, Taylor (2010) found that principals guided by a personal theory of change and decision-making, led second order change successfully, and had gains in student achievement—trust resulted and fidelity of implementation was evident.

School administrators need professional development in decision-making, collaboration, consensus building, accessibility, and in communication. "….a shared decision-making process is not easy. A leader who employs this process needs to be very skilled," (Middle School Principal 66, 1/9/2005). Without clear expectations from the superintendent related to the importance of the skills and knowledge in leading shared decision-making, principals will continue to have vague ideas and will rely on intuition. Given the high accountability environment of principals' and superintendents' work, it would be in the best interest of school leaders' careers, to place a high value on consistent expectations for shared decision-making because by involving others, you increase the likelihood that they will commit to the changes.

Future school administrators need to acquire mastery of the skills of decision-making, including forms of shared decision-making. Mastery implies modeling and practicing in the field with feedback from a scholar practitioner.

The practice of decision-making cannot be improved without improving communication skills. As Lambert (2004) suggested active listening, clarifying, responding, and reinforcing are basic communication skills for leading others. Within graduate programs, the inclusion of collaborative work and affirmatory communication skills' development would support mastery of shared decision-making.

The need for this leader development is especially important now. Since 2001, many school districts have moved away from school-based management to more centralized decision-making to ensure achievement of the expectations of NCLB. In doing so, the need for shared decision-making at the school level may be perceived as diminished in importance. The authors believe such thinking is faulty. Shared decision-making builds trust and commitment to decisions for successful change in student learning.

Concepts of equity, access to excellence, social justice, and accountability are inextricably interwoven in the decision-making processes of principals for better or worse. Principals need to own a theory of leadership decision-making practice which they communicate and implement with mastery and consistency to improve all students' learning.

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Roberts, K., & Sampson, P. (October 2011). A Study of Principal Leadership Style and Teacher Job Performance

NCPEA Education Leadership Review is a nationally refereed journal published two times a year, in Winter (April), and Fall (October) by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. **Editor: Kenneth Lane,** Southeastern Louisiana University; **Assistant Editor: Gerard Babo,** Seton Hall University; **Founding Editor: Theodore Creighton,** Virginia Tech.

Note: This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this module is published in the *Education Leadership Review*, Volume 12, Number 2 (October, 2011), ISSN 1532-0723.

Introduction

Leadership is an important ingredient in life and education. Competent leadership helps schools through periods of academic distress and comes in a variety of styles depending on the circumstance. Mills (2005), defined leadership as "a process by which one person influences the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of others (p. 11)…is the ability to get other people to do something significant that they might not otherwise do (p.12)."

Researchers found leadership style related to job performance, employee wellbeing related to consideration, and that transformational leadership has a positive effect on employees' performance (Kuoppala et al., 2008 and Halldorsson, 2007). Barnett (2003) found teachers seem to be more motivated by the principal's care and concern.

In this age of accountability and high-stakes testing, principals are feeling pressure. The question that guided this study was, "because of the pressures to make certain the school succeeds, does the principal use a leadership style that may inadvertently have a positive or negative effect on their respective school?" To answer this question, the Ohio State University LBDQ-12 was used to determine the leadership style.

Review of the Literature

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) stated that "the successful organization has one major attribute that sets it apart from unsuccessful organizations: dynamic and effective leadership." (p. 83). This definition, in essence, is the art of inspiring others. Manske, Jr. (1987), concluded that the leader has a vision and can see what is needed which inspires others.

A review of literature on leadership styles for transactional and transformational leadership showed it was first identified by Burns (1978) and further clarified by Bass (1985). Transformational leadership behaviors include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bono & Judge, 2004). Whereas, transactional leadership behaviors include contingent reward, management by exception-active, management by exception-passive, and laissez-faire (Bono & Judge, 2004).

Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) listed different leadership styles as autocratic, beureaucractic, laissez-faire, charismatic, democratic, participative, situational, transactional, and transformational. Other researchers identified traits of leadership as self-confidence, adjustment, sociability, integrity, ambition, dominance, self-esteem, ambition, dominance, and originality (Bass, 1990). The trait theory of leadership style lost its focus and received criticism (Conger & Karungo, 1988). However, Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) supported the trait theory through their meta-analysis of literature.

The trait theory was further examined through personality traits of leadership. Peterson, et al. ((2003) determined that a leader's personality does affect organizational performance. Tichy and Bennis (2007) discussed the judgment decisions of leaders as based on courage and character based on strong values. They state that good decisions are made when leaders have the courage to follow their values. Zaccaro et al. (1991) found that leaders' characteristic of social awareness and their ability to make decisions is based on this self perception of the needs of the group.

Studies on leadership continue to be researched and studied by researchers. Davis and Leon (2011) identified 20 principles on effective leadership. The Ohio State University Leadership instrument called the Q12 was developed as part of the trait theory of leadership. The components of leadership patterns in the Q12 instrument were identified as consideration and structure (Fleishman, 1973). Consideration is the relationship between the leader and the other group members. It is the participative inclusion of others in the decision making process. Structure is defined as behaviors that leaders use to define their roles and the activities of the group.

Researchers have studied transformational, participative, and transactional leadership and the relationship to organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Bersen & Linto, 2005; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). The researchers that have found a relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction has grown in the last decade (Nielsen, Yarker, Randall, & Munir, 2009; Berson & Linton, 2005). Nielsen, Yarker, Randall, and Munir (2009) found a relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Other researchers have examined the environment to determine if the political nature of the workplace is related to job performance as an indirect link to job satisfaction (Rosen, Levy, & Hall, 2006). They found that job satisfaction, increased work outcomes. Ismail, Zainuddin, and Ibrahim (2010) found that leaders who were able to use participative and consultative styles of leadership had a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Ram and Prabhakar (2010) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and job involvement with transformational leadership. Sahkin and Sahkin (2003) concluded transformational leaders drive higher performance by giving people the opportunity to make meaning for themselves. Educator's perceptions of their leader's style of leadership has been studied as it affects the educator' job satisfaction. Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) studied

leadership styles and job satisfaction and found that a positive relationship between job satisfaction and leadership styles produced higher job performance.

Julian (2005) studied the leadership traits of CEOs and job performance. They found some traits have a relationship to their effectiveness. Collins (2001) found that great leaders had a strong drive while remaining modest and humble.

Job Performance

Kim (1986) found that teachers reported that consideration seemed to be more related to their job performance than to of initiation of structure. Kim (1986) also found that teacher reported degree of initiation of structure of their principal was not significantly correlated with teacher satisfaction. Mason-Bush (2003) concluded that teachers' motivation and performance in schools were affected by the principal's leadership style.

Job performance was evaluated by the use of teacher's self-evaluation. March and Overall (1979) found that teacher's self-evaluation were valid and reliable and positively correlated to student evaluations.

Castetter (1976) wrote:

Day-to-day behavior of administrators virtually affects the performance of colleagues. Personnel are quick to detect how the leader feels about organizational intent and formal procedures. The actions of an administrator always convey meaning…and will be observed by personnel and will condition, positively or negatively their behavior pattern. (p. 23)

Statement of Problem

This study was conducted to determine the relationship between leadership styles of principals and teacher job performance. The leadership style of the principal was determined by teacher perception using the LDDQ-12 which defines leadership style as degrees of consideration and structure. The teacher job performance was determined by teachers' self-assessment.

Research Hypotheses

1. Teachers work under a High-Consideration, High Structure (HC, HS) principal will experience higher job performance than teachers working under a High-Consideration, Low-Structure (HC, LS) principal or Low-Consideration, High-Structure (LC, HS) principal or Low-Consideration, Low-Structure (LS, LC) principal.
2. Teachers work under a HC, LS principal will experience higher job performance than teachers working under a LC, HS principal or LC, LS principal.
3. Teachers work under a LC, HS principal will experience higher job performance than teachers working with a LC, LS principal.

Methodology

The data were gathered from various size school districts in East Texas selected randomly. Administration was contacted for permission to distribute the instrument to the teachers. After permission was granted the instrument was sent to the principals. They distributed the instrument and they collected the completed instrument. Confidentiality was enhanced by advising the teachers to leave off their name and school district name. Teachers identified their own job performance. Kim (1986) found a significant positive correlation between self reported job performance of teachers and principals' leadership behavior.

Data Analysis

The primary purpose of this study was to determine if a principal's leadership style was related to teacher job performance. Four leadership styles were identified: 1) HC, HS; 2) HC, LS; 3) LC, HS; and 4) LC, LS. Job performance was defined as teacher's perception of their performance.

This study examined one dependent variable. The instrument that measured teaching job performance yielded one score, the individual's average. In order to test the hypotheses, descriptive statistics were used which were percentages and means. The principals were classified into the four leadership styles as identified by the teacher.

Teacher Performance Level	High-Consideration, High-Structure (n=41)	High-Consideration, Low-Structure (n=13)	Low-Consideration, High-Sructure (n=18)	Low-Consideration, Low-Structure (n=40)
Have difficulty or Need help	5.0%	7.7%	0%	(2.5%
Proficient or Very Proficient	72.5%	69.2%	72.2%	42.5%

Teachers Job Performance Level Working Under Principals With A Specific Leadership Style

Leadership Style	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
HC, HS	41	4.23	0.61

HC, LS	13	3.99	0.65
LC, HS	18	3.17	0.37
LC, LS	40	3.88	0.66
TOTAL	112	4.02	

Job Performance of Teachers Operating Under Four Leadership Styles

Analysis of the LDBQ-12 scores determined the principal's leadership style. The largest group of teachers (38%) (Table 1), indicated they worked under a HC, HS principal (Table 2). The mean of the two variable was x= 4.23.

Hypothesis 1. Teachers working under a HC, HS principal, will experience higher job performance than teachers working under a HC, LS principal or LC, HS principal or LC, LS principal.

The data from Table 1 showed a higher percentage of teachers (72.5%) working under HC, HS principals performed better than teachers working under a HC, LS principal (69.2%), LC, HS principal (72.2%), and LC, LS principal (42.5%).

Table 2 revealed that teachers working under a HC, HS principal had a mean of (x=4.23) which is higher than teachers working under a HC, LS principal (x=3.99), LC,LS principal (x=3.88) and LC, HS principal (x=3.17).

In summary, hypothesis number one was supported by the data. Teachers, in their perception, experience higher job performance while working under a HS, HC principal than teachers working under LC, LS principals, LC, HS principals, or HC, LS principals.

Hypothesis 2. Teachers working under a HC, LS principal they will experience higher job performance than teachers working under a LC, HS principal or LC, LS principal.

Table 1 revealed teachers (69.2%) performed better working under a HC, LS principal than teachers working under a LC, LS principal (42.5%) but lower than teachers working under a LC, HS principal (72.2%). Table 2 indicated that teachers (x=3.99) working under a HC, LS performed better than teachers working under a LC, LS principal (x=3.88) but poorer than teachers working under a LC, HS principal (4.17).

In summary hypothesis number 2 was supported when comparing teachers working under HC, LS principals to teachers working under LC, LS principals but was not supported when compared to teachers working under LC, HS principals.

Hypothesis 3. Teachers working under a LC, HS principal will experience higher job performance than teachers working under a LC, LS principal.

Table 1 revealed that teachers (72.2%) who worked under a LC, HS principal performed better than teachers who worked under a LC, LS principal (42.5%). Table 2 also revealed that the mean performance score for teachers who work under a LC, HS, principal (x= 4.17) was higher than teachers who worked under a LC, LS principal (x=3.88). Hypothesis three was supported. Teachers working under a LC, HS principal have higher job performance than teachers working under a LC, LS principal.

Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to determine if principal's leadership style was related to teacher job performance. The investigation focused on the relationship between leadership styles of principals and teacher job performance.

The teachers were asked to rate their own performance and with percentages and means calculated. Hypotheses 1 and 3 were supported and hypothesis 2 was partially supported. Teachers working under HC, HS principals perceive they perform better than teachers working under the other three leadership styles.

Teachers working under LC, HS principals perform better than teachers working under HC, LS principals while teachers working under HC, LS principals perform slightly better than teachers working under LC, LS principals. The difference between each successive style was modest but the difference between the HC,HS and LC, LS was great.

These findings indicate that both higher levels of structure and consideration were productive of superior job performance. A final observation is the LC,HS style was more highly associated with better job performance than the HC, LS style, thus partially reversing and rejecting hypothesis 2. This may indicate that organized structure and direction is of more importance that high consideration.

It is important for the principal to understand their faculty and utilize the most effective leadership style. One recommendation would be to determine the generational differences as different generations respond differently to a given leadership style. A second recommendation would be to lean to the side of human relations (consideration) but ever watchful. It seems that sometimes when the pressure is on that consideration takes a backseat. The principal needs to be aware of this so they don't forget the consideration side of leadership. The third recommendation is for the principal to continually self-evaluate and reflect to old themselves accountable.

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Young, K., Larsen, D., & Mixon, J. (October 2011). The Relationship of Ethics Courses in Principal Preparation Programs and Ethical School Leadership Policies, Practices, and Programs

NCPEA Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

NCPEA Education Leadership Review is a nationally refereed journal published two times a year, in Winter (April), and Fall (October) by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. **Editor: Kenneth Lane,** Southeastern Louisiana University; **Assistant Editor: Gerard Babo,** Seton Hall University; **Founding Editor: Theodore Creighton,** Virginia Tech.

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Introduction

With disturbing frequency the news media inform us of the latest transgression by a member of the education profession, be that person a teacher or principal. In 1997, Mary Kay Lettourneau, an elementary school teacher in a school district near Seattle, WA, was convicted of statutory rape of a former male student, Vili Fualaau, who was 13 when his former mentor, then 35, became pregnant. School law provides other examples of

ethical lapses by teachers and administrators (see, for example, *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, 1992; *Toney v. Fairbanks North Star Borough School District*, 1994; and *Trautvetter v. Quick*, 1990).

In 2005, the Houston Independent School District launched an investigation of undue help from teachers tasked with supervising student testing based on suspicious results reflected in statewide tests administered in 2004 (Axtman, 2005). Other parts of the country are not immune. “From Boston to Florida to California, school districts have been investigating claims that educators are providing students with answers, changing answers after the test is over, and giving students extra time” (Axtman, 2005, ¶ 4). Other examples of teachers and principals cheating to boost student test results were reported in Indiana, Mississippi, and Arizona (Axtman, 2005).

The principal preparation program that leads to licensure may or may not include a course specifically dedicated to “ethics.” Despite this apparent inconsistency, questions of ethical behavior and morally-purposed leadership are threaded thickly through coursework whose focus embraces the traits that effective leaders should have—or at least aspire to. Whether rooted in an educational setting (e.g. Evans, 2007; Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2007; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005; Starratt, 1994; Strike, Haller, & Soltice, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Willower & Licata, 1997) or in the world of business (e.g. Collins, 2001; Kidder, 1995; Lencione, 2002), consideration of how leadership should be judged against an ethical standard goes hand-in-hand with establishing and bringing to reality the vision for an organization.

It might appear that any effort to require a moral compass in educators, including school leaders, is doomed at the outset. However, in a multi-cultural social setting that seems fraught with ethical ambiguity, the role of ethics in school administration could not be more important in 2010. As Kidder (1995) noted in his seminal study of integrity in the workplace, ethics is not a luxury; it is central to our survival.

Literature Review

Professional educators have participated in school reform initiatives to establish performance standards to strengthen educational leadership preparation programs (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007). According to Shipman, Queen, and Peel (2007), the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards were first published in 1995. ELCC Standard 5 addresses ethical leadership as stated, “Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairly, and in an ethical manner” (p. 119). Likewise, Standard 5 of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) suggests that leaders act in an ethical and fair manner toward students. This includes acting in ways that promote matters of social justice. Johnson and Ulnine (2005) suggest that instructional leaders who demonstrate the attributes contained within the ISLLC standards have been successful in closing achievement gaps in their schools and that leaders in successful schools have applied this standard by elevating the concerns of stakeholders beyond personal concerns, which are exacerbated by issues of race, ethnicity, and class, to address the needs of students.

Whereas much of the discourse within education surrounding ethics and social justice tend to focus upon standards or closing the achievement gap, with an emphasis on specific performance-based skills for educational leaders, it has been suggested that potential leaders also need to be prepared to engage in the difficult work of social justice that entails; “a shift in values, attitudes and behaviors within the school community” (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005, p. 214). Lunenburg and Irby (2006) defined an ethical principal as “one who, in the face of adversity, ambiguity, and challenge reflects on what is right by some set standard or code and acts in a rational and caring manner to resolve problems and conduct business” (p. 346).

Starratt (2004) wrote extensively about “being present,” which he explained was achieved by really reflecting on a situation fully and understanding all components, then accepting the moral responsibility for completely addressing that situation with the involvement of significant others. Starratt (2004) wrote “the sense of moral responsibility to respond to a certain situation or event grows in proportion to our being present to that situation

or event” (p. 91). Johnson (2009) identified several personal characteristics, which he found contributed to ethical leadership. Johnson noted that courage enabled leaders to take risks; optimism enabled them to persist, while compassion and justice enabled them to consider the needs of others rather than focusing only upon their own personal goals.

The study of ethics is extremely complex since the issues being considered are choices about what is considered right or wrong when examining human behavior (Rebore, 2001). Yet, as Johnson (2009) stated “The misery caused by unethical leaders drives home an important point: Ethics is at the heart of leadership” (p. xvi) and thus the study of ethics and ethics courses deserves the attention of ongoing investigation. Although, there are multiple approaches and challenges to teaching ethics to educational leaders (Coombs, 1998; Nash, 2002; Shapiro & Sefkovich, 2005; Surface, 2007;Vokey, 2005), there is a general consensus that ethical foundations provide lenses through which educational leaders can evaluate current practices (Beck & Murphy, 1997; Starratt, 1997) and, thus, need to be intentionally and explicitly taught (Bowen, Bessett, & Chan, 2006).

Methods

Participants

The researchers in the current study used survey methodology in an effort to investigate whether the inclusion of ethics courses in a principal preparation program made a difference in the development and evaluation of ethical school policies, programs, and practices. The participants who responded to the survey (n = 206) included principals and assistant principals from Washington (n = 45) and Texas (n = 77), as well as current students, enrolled in a principal preparation program from Texas (n = 84) who had some level of administration experience. Table 1 shows the characteristics by state of the participants in the study.

Characteristics	Washington n(%)	Texas n(%)
Job Title		
Principal	26(13%)	75(36%)
Assistant Principal	19(9%)	2(1%)
Graduate Student	0(0%)	84(41%)
Gender		
Male	32(16%)	51(25%)
Female	13(6%)	110(53%)
Ethnicity		
HispanicLatino	0(0%)	28(14%)
WhiteCaucasion	38(18%)	125(61%)
BlackAfrican American	0(0%)	7(3%)
Native HawaiianPacific Islander	1(1%)	0(0%)
Asian	3(2%)	1(1%)
2 races	3(2%)	0(0%)
Ethics Course in Prep Program		
Yes	11(5%)	65(32%)

No	34(17%)	96(47%)
(19,1)	(19,2)	(19,3)

Participant Characteristics by State

Note. Percentages are based upon total respondents.

Materials and Procedures

Instrument. The survey was developed by the researchers and based upon various models of ethical decision-making and practices (Rebore, 2001; Shapiro & Gross, 2008). It consisted of a demographic section, 48 statements that participants would rate their level of agreement or disagreement on a five point Likert-scale (0=Neutral, 1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree), and three open-ended questions. The initial survey instrument was piloted on 18 doctoral students in educational leadership who had experience as a school principal. Minimal changes were made to language and organization to clarify directions and/or items.

Fifteen of the items in the survey dealt with the principal's development and evaluation of school policies, programs, and practices addressing issues related to social justice, equity, confidentiality, acceptance, and respect between students and faculty. Principal component analysis (PCA; Jackson, 1991) was used to assure that the fifteen items maintained the three constructs for analysis: Development and evaluation of ethical school *polices*, development and evaluation of ethical school *programs*, and development and evaluation of school *practices*. The average component loading for the policy questions was .92 and explained 85.94% of the variance. The average component loading for the program questions was .92 and explained 83.32% of the variance. Finally, the average component loading for the practices questions was .91 and explained 83.24 % of the variance.

Procedures. Participants were solicited for the current study through list serves, personal and school e-mail, and through electronic communication embedded in an online educational leadership course. Participants were provided a web address to the survey-hosting site (Surveymonkey.com), where instructions for the survey and estimated time of completion were included. Participants were not allowed to progress through the various sections of the survey unless all questions were answered. This restriction was intended to diminish the number of incomplete surveys.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Does the inclusion of an ethics course in a principal preparation program make a difference in the development and evaluation of ethical school policies?
2. Does the inclusion of an ethics course in a principal preparation program make a difference in the development and evaluation of ethical school programs?
3. Does the inclusion of an ethics course in a principal preparation program make a difference in the development and evaluation of ethical school practices?

Participant responses to statements were analyzed based upon whether they indicated having an ethics course in their principal preparation program or not. Their responses were used as the predictor variable in the current analysis. The outcome variables of interest were constructed from the sum of participant responses in each of the three extracted constructs of interest (policies, programs, and practices). Independent sample *t*-tests were used to investigate the research questions.

Results

A *t*-test was used to test the effects of a course in ethics in principal preparation programs on the policies, programs, and practices that principals develop and evaluate within their schools. A statistically significant difference was found between leaders who had an ethics course in their program and those who did not regarding the development and evaluation of ethical school policies, $t\ (204) = 2.22$, $p<.05$, $d = .31$ (Ethics

Course: M = 21.79, SD = 3.23; No Ethics Course: M = 20.65, SD = 3.76), and practices, t (204) = 2.43, p<.05, d = .33 (Ethics Course: M = 21.78, SD = 2.55; No Ethics Course: M = 20.63, SD = 3.80). That is, those individuals who had ethics courses in their preparation program were more likely to develop and evaluate ethical school policies and practices that sought to ensure social justice, equity, confidentiality, acceptance, and respect among students and faculty than their colleagues who did not have an ethics course in their principal preparation program. There was no statistically significant difference in the development and evaluation of ethical programming between principals who had an ethics course in their preparation program and those who did not.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Two hundred six individuals responded to an electronically delivered survey investigating whether the inclusion of an ethics course in principal preparation programs impacted the development and evaluation of ethical school policies, programs, and practices. T-tests were used to investigate whether a main effect existed for the inclusion of an ethics course in principal preparation programs regarding a principal's development and evaluation of ethical school policies, programs, and practices. A main effect for ethics courses was detected for the development and evaluation of ethical policies and practices, but not for programs. This suggests that those respondents who had designated ethics courses in their principal preparation programs were more likely to develop and evaluate their policies and practices in regard to matters of social justice than those students who did not have a specific course in ethics as part of their principal preparation programs.

Weber's (1990) limited review of literature about the impact of ethics courses in business programs suggested a positive short-term impact upon practice. Likewise, McCabe, Dukerich, and Dutton (1994) found that there was negligible impact of ethics courses in one MBA program. The findings from the current study tend to support the findings from other professional programs, within the context of educational leadership. As such, principal preparation programs should include an entire course dedicated to ethics in leadership, or at the very least be intentional in including ethical content as

a major component of coursework. To maximize the likelihood of graduates from principal preparation programs to act ethically in regard to practices and polices related to social justice, it has been suggested that in addition to formal training in ethics, principals need ongoing formal (coursework and professional development) and informal (peer-based support groups) modes of ethics training (Dempster & Berry, 2003).

The question remains, though, as to why there is tendency for the positive impact. In the current study, there are several limitations that could possible be attributable. First, the sample for this study was purposeful and not random, so the representativeness of the findings should be interpreted with appropriate caution. Second, analyses were not conducted to control for possible confounding variables such as state, gender, age, or ethnicity. According to McCabe, Dukerich, and Dutton (1994), it might be attributable to the course content, needing more time between the class and actual practice to measure its impact, or some other factor. Finally, Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy (2005) suggested that the facilitation of ethical behavior, specifically as it related to social justice awareness, in professional preparation programs might be simply be attributable to faculty who model the kinds of organizations they intend their graduate students to create.

It is recommended that future research seek to conduct this study with a stronger sampling design and include possible confounding variables in the analysis. Also, future research should consider some of instructional practices within ethics courses to better understand best practices for supporting ethical behavior by practitioners after graduating from their programs.

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Berry, J. (October 2011). Leading With Twenty-First Century Learning: The Emerging Virtual K-12 Educational Organization

The centralized bureaucratically arranged school district of brick and mortar buildings clustered within a village, town, or city is in the process of changing to a hybrid virtual school system linked by computers, software, and the Internet. The educational system of the future will be designed around the capabilities of software that can personalize the curriculum to make learning more meaningful. This case study outlines how one K-12 school district is managing change related to teaching, leading, and learning as it shifts to a more student-centered approach to education within a distributed, bureaucratically arranged, virtually enhanced structure of schooling that combines bricks with clicks.

Education Leadership Review, Volume 12, Number 2 (October 2011)

NCPEA Education Leadership Review is a nationally refereed journal published two times a year, in Winter (April), and Fall (October) by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. **Editor: Kenneth Lane,** Southeastern Louisiana University; **Assistant Editor: Gerard Babo,** Seton Hall University; **Founding Editor: Theodore Creighton,** Virginia Tech.

Note: This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this module is published in the *Education Leadership Review,* Volume 12, Number 2 (October, 2011), ISSN 1532-0723. Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton and Brad Bizzell, Virginia Tech.

Introduction

The American educational system is about to make a transition into the future that will alter its structure as well as the core technology of teaching and learning. The data gathered from this case study indicated one school district is in the formative stage of developing a virtual organizational structure based upon a convergence of high quality software, Internet connectivity, and capacity building to support digital teaching and learning. Fully supported teaching and learning will require a commitment to an organizational structure(s) that builds capacity for a more virtual school system.

The Legacy of Bureaucratic Education

In the last thirty years a major transformation has taken place in American education. What was expected of the K-12 educational organization in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries reached its zenith at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Until the twenty-first century American education was successful if some students graduated with rudimentary knowledge and skill as productive members of society. In the twenty-first century teaching, learning, and the educational system itself have been buffeted by forces that challenged the traditional bureaucratic arrangement of schools with tall administrative hierarchies, centralized decision-making, and tightly controlled structures. The model of American education based upon the industrial factory is undergoing a revolution based upon emerging technologies that redefine school organization as a virtual as well as a physical learning environment.

Research on Organizational K-12 Change

This school district was being shaped as an organization by the use of technology and software to form new structures that were transforming the traditional school district bureaucracy. The educational system that required efficiency and effectiveness to produce an informed and literate citizenry for the 20th century is still a highly bureaucratic organization in the 21st century (see, for example Callahan, 1962; Tyack, 1972). Yet, this school

system was in a formative stage of significant structural transformation that was supported by a broader and deeper application of technology. This research served as an indicator of emerging organizational change that will challenge the continued viability of traditional face-to-face classroom instruction facilitated by a teacher in a lecture/discussion format.

Study Parameters

This research was a descriptive non-experimental case study of a school district administrative staff ‘s perception of the organizational capacity to improve teaching and learning through the use of technology (Johnson, 2001). Interviews of administrators were conducted during a year in which the school district had asked for community support to issue laptop computers to students in grades 7-12 (subsequently passed). This research charted the conditions under which this educational organization was changing to address the needs of twenty-first century learners. The leaders of the school were asked to explain the value and use of hardware and software tools that were adopted to improve teaching and learning. Nine interviews were conducted over a two-day period with central office administrators, principals, and a member of the board of education.

The goal of the research was to determine how this school district was adapting to the changing nature of teaching and learning in the emerging digital age. The specific question under study was, “How does the K-12 school district adapt, as an organization, to the changing nature of teaching and learning caused by the integration of digital learning?” The question required the administrative staff to consider the nature and conditions of learning within the traditional configuration of a centralized school district with teaching in classrooms configured for classroom instruction within brick and mortar buildings for face-to-face teaching in a lecture discussion format.

The Emerging K-12 Educational Organization

This school district was actively adopting technology and software as integrated, and integral, components of the traditional bureaucratic hierarchical brick and mortar system of schooling. Not only was technology

changing the nature of teaching and learning, aspects of the educational organization were being replaced by *software* that extended the nature of school organization into virtual management, virtual leadership, virtual pedagogy, and virtual learning that resulted in online and hybrid courses that, taken together, were an extension of the local school and school district. This study indicated that this K-12 educational organization was taking technology beyond a useful application of computers as one-dimensional tools to an emerging multi-dimensional media rich structure (or potentially structures) that extended learning into a personalized digital educational experience.

The Infrastructure of the More Digital K-12 Educational Organization

The infrastructure of the K-12 educational organization in this school district was beginning the transition to a blended structure in support of virtual learning. This transition began to accelerate with the convergence of 1) connectivity to the Internet; 2) dynamic use of software for learning; and, 3) a desire to provide high quality individualized and personalized learning. High quality software made possible, through the Internet, a more individualized learning experience. Expectations for learning were moving to a point that school administrators began utilizing laptop computers as integral tools for learning. As one administrator stated:

When you give a kid an assignment that would benefit from a computer, I want that kid to have a computer available to him at that moment so he can do it. So we have the responsibility to have that . . . to have that available to students. And the other piece is we have to make sure that we have a connection so that it's efficient, and high speed . . . it's at least as good as what a kid's going to experience outside the school. We have to make sure it's working all the time.

The infrastructure issue meant that in this district the computer would become *on-demand for student* use all day long every day of the school year. It meant that the educational organization was intending to build, and

would continue to build, a structured network of servers, wires, towers, routers and personnel to maintain and support on-demand use for multiple classes of students who required Internet connectivity. The question that needed to be answered was: “What must the educational organization build or implement in order to establish the capacity to support multiple users for all day every day learning?” Another administrator indicated that organizational support required a rethinking of learning support.

Well, from a pure technology standpoint we need to be able to have the right kinds of access, the right kinds of speeds for broadband access, for example. We need to have a reliable infrastructure and we need to have reliable access to the tools, resources, programs that students and/or a teacher might leverage . . . So you can have a beautifully designed network that doesn’t take into consideration the fact that three science classes might be teaching the same class at the same time down on the science wing. So, it’s not just thirty kids that are going to watch that video independently at their own pace. We now have one hundred and twenty kids that are going to watch that video. So we have to take into account capacity as a part of reliability as well.

Consider some other structural issues that change how a school district thinks about capacity when digital learning is factored into the day-to-day process of learning:

1. Class size—What is the optimum number of students a teacher can work within a virtual environment?
2. Physical space—Will the brick and mortar classroom be less of a need when students and teachers use digital learning space?
3. Anytime learning—Will virtual learning extend the school day for teachers and students?
4. Virtual learning—Does software replace a brick and mortar classroom and face-to-face lecture with online asynchronous individualized learning?

One school leader claimed time and learning would change dramatically in the future. “We are going away from Carnegie units and are heading

towards standards-based mastery—period. I know it's going. I know we're headed there."

The Leadership Expectation for Understanding Software

The typical preparation of school administrators involves a curriculum based upon a set of standards widely accepted as representative of what school leaders should know and do to perform at high levels of skill (CCSSO, 2008; ELCC, 2011). One of those standards—Standard three—requires an aspiring school principal to manage the school organization and maintain a conducive learning environment: "Education leaders ensure the success of all students by managing organizational systems and resources for a safe, high performing learning environment" (CCSSO, 2011, p. 19). More specifically, "A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by ensuring the management of the school organization, operation, and resources through monitoring and evaluating the school management and operational systems; efficiently using human, fiscal, and technological resources in a school environment (ELCC, 2011, p. 5)**.** This school district had an evolving, yet increasing expectation for school principals in the area of technology and its use as an organizational system, and as a teaching and learning instrument:

I think ten years ago of fifteen years ago when we were hiring principals we were looking for people who could manage a building, who could deal with parents, who could handle the management of the building. That has evolved over the course of time to be, 'We want principals now who are instructional leaders and instructional leadership now means more than comfort level, an expectation—a demand—that technology be part . . . properties of technology be part of that whole instruction.

Performance as a school principal still requires the management and operation of the building. The position, however, is expanding its expectations and skill competencies to manage and lead instructional improvement within a technology rich environment:

They, some, have a really, really basic understanding. Some have a really advanced understanding. And, hopefully, the administrator/principal is going into all of those different classrooms and seeing the potential of how technology could be used in so many different ways . . . It's not that they need to know how to do everything, it's that they need to know that it's possible and that it could be done in this new way. They need to know that I could set my MacBook down and use the built-in camera to record a short video using the whole class, or I could have my students contacting other students in another location using Chat Client. That sort of thing.

The expectations presented by the administrators of this district reflected an orientation to the necessary skills and abilities as an instructional leader for the future. Leadership required an understanding of how technology *changed the locus of learning* from the teacher to the student:

I want a principal to know, I want a principal to be sold on the idea that a classroom has to be student centered. I want them to emphasize constantly and to understand that we're talking about learning. We're not talking about teaching. And that changes the whole dynamic for a teacher. So they need to know that technology has to be a tool to affect a kid's learning. And they need to be a source of, a resource for [a] teacher to know where to go to become better at being the classroom facilitator.

In this district there was a growing awareness that software was changing the act of teaching. Thus, the position of instructional leader had to be one that understood, and had the ability to support, an emerging approach to teaching in a high tech and high touch environment that placed more responsibility for learning on the student.

Teacher as Facilitator of Learning

Teaching has traditionally been a job in which a captive audience of students was required to listen to teacher directed performance. Although this study sought to determine aspects of structural change due to the introduction of technology/software, teaching in this school district

remained primarily a directed, didactic approach to lesson presentation. That is, the teacher served as the filter through which most of the content and information in the learning process passed. Students were recipients of a teacher-centered approach to knowledge acquisition.

However, the evidence suggested in this study that introduction of a personal computer—that contained software to enhance teaching and learning—produced an organizational structural change in teaching pedagogy that carried over to student learning. Because students were able to interact with the software in ways that expected and required more self-directed learning, teachers adjusted their teaching pedagogy to a more facilitative approach. Although the teacher as a facilitator of learning can be used, and has always been used, as a pedagogical approach to teaching, it began to take on new meaning in the digital learning environment. As one administrator described teaching in a digital classroom:

To a large degree it's more of a technical support person. You know, making sure the students can navigate the various programs and they have what they need and they're being encouraged. It's different than when you're providing the instruction.

If one contrasts the primary mode of lesson presentation—directed teaching—with administrative expectations in this district, the teacher as facilitator captures a shift in how this district was in an early stage of developing a culture that, pedagogically, shifted more learning responsibility to the learner.

The administrators saw signs of this shift.

I think one, they have to be reasonably comfortable with just the technology and the interface to the technology. Two, I think they have to be comfortable enough to realize that the students know more than they do about technology and be comfortable in learning from the students around the interface to the technology. Three, they should be secure that they are

the experts in the content, not necessarily the modality in which it's going to be delivered. I also think if the teachers focus on helping the student to rationalize and interpret and make decisions about the information that they're getting and learning about with the content that the teacher is the expert in, they're giving them an extremely valuable skill from the learning standpoint.

If there is such a thing as the traditional role of teacher as the source of knowledge through which information is absorbed through a lecture, that role is being challenged in this district. As another administrator succinctly stated: "So, the kid manages his own learning and the teacher simply facilitates it."

Individualized/Personalized Learning for Quality

The school district in this study had a solid history of technology use going back a decade. However, prior to this study the school district piloted a project to supply a cohort of 8th grade students with high quality laptop computers. This project served as a foundation for encouraging an interest and desire for student-centered learning. As much as the teachers moved incrementally in the direction of technology driven pedagogy to facilitate learning, the students moved even further and faster toward an acceptance and use of technology.

I think the number one impact is student engagement. They're tuned in. Students are tuning in . . . They're engaged. They're going to learn more. When they're thinking about what's going on, then they have questions. They're able to apply it a little bit better. So, I think that's where I see the number one impact. And, it's immediate . . . like immediate engagement in the learning.

Another administrator viewed the adoption of the technology/software structure as a fundamental change that shifted power and control to the learner. Although this shift in power and control forced more responsibility on the student, it also changed the work of the teacher:

Q: Does virtual instructional delivery alter the teacher's authority and control of student learning?

A: I think it does because it puts more responsibility on the student to learn and take control of their learning. In my mind it does require the teacher to help the student learn how to learn. And, I know that maybe this sounds, I don't know, too theoretical or educational, but so much of what—at least when I was in school—was about memorization, wasn't about the learning itself.

The reason for investing in technology/software involved an overall commitment to higher quality learning across the organization. Thus, another organizational structure—assessment and accountability—appeared to be a component of a system responsibility to measure learning progress to ensure higher levels of achievement within an individualized and personalized curriculum:

I think you need a feedback mechanism for the student immediately because one, the students want to know right away if they got the answer right or where they are on the test. The teachers should know they are hitting the target with whatever percentile they're comfortable with—90%, 80%, 70%.—for the students to get it . . . for the teacher to say I've successfully got all that I could in terms of learning in the students.

Organizational and Pedagogical Gap in Adoption of Technology/Software

This study highlighted a *lagging adoption* on the part of teachers and administrators to embrace technology tools for purposes of 1) organizing a virtual structure for schooling; and, 2) using software tools to facilitate learning. Whether or not the knowledge of, and uses for, software tools made sense or had validity there was a cautious acceptance in what teachers and other school leaders would readily adopt and implement in regard to technology and software innovation. The stages of Rogers' (1993) innovation-decision process outlines how teachers and administrators

moved over a period of five-eight years to the technology and software advancements in this district:

1. *Knowledge* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains an understanding of how it functions.
2. *Persuasion* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) forms a favorable or an unfavorable attitude towards the innovation.
3. *Decision* takes place when an individual (or other decision-making unit) engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation.
4. *Implementation* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) puts a new idea into use.
5. *Confirmation* takes place when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation-decision already made, but he or she may reverse this previous decision if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation. (p. 163)

In this study there was recognition that the educational delivery system, as well as teaching and learning, were evolving into something different from what the schools, classrooms, teaching and learning looked like in the recent past. As one school leader explained, "Education tends to move pretty slowly. It probably took forty years to get the overhead projector out of the bowling alley into the classroom." And, the problem isn't only one of resistance to change. It is also an incremental adaptation of the school district bureaucracy to changes in physical space, teaching, learning, and use of time to support the learning process. According to another school leader:

Whether there's a piece of technology involved or not, I think that the space has to change to reflect what's going on more and more with teaching and learning and that is that people are realizing that it is a social activity and it is something that we do in a variety of modes, that we don't just "sit and get" but that we gather together and we reflect quietly and we work on projects in small groups and we collaborate and we build and . . . I mean so I need space that allows me the flexibility to jump from a lecture.

In this school district there was an incubation period that helped parents, teachers, principals, board members, and other community leaders gain a positive perspective before an implementation decision was made.

Christensen, Horn, & Johnson (2008) described the inability of present day schools to innovate and change because they have a “structure that mirrors the architecture of their product” (p. 207). The fundamental problem with bringing about innovation and change is that the adults in the typical school district do not have the knowledge or capacity to make the dramatic changes in that traditional bureaucratic architecture.

An architectural change for a school entails combining subjects, reordering who does what and how, imagining new roles for computers, instituting project-based work, altering the hours, and so forth. Combining the study of history and literature into a single course in which each discipline is used to examine the other is an example of an architectural innovation. (p. 208)

This study surfaced the divide between how one educational organization recognized the impact of technology/software innovation upon teaching, with a lagging but growing awareness of the disruptive nature of this innovation upon the entire school system. Yet, this divide did not keep the district from moving forward with implementation.

A Theory of Virtual Educational Organization

Drawing from the work of Mishra and Koehler (2006) who outlined the emerging digital pedagogy (see Berry, 2010) it was evident that the evolution of digital teaching was being supported by the parallel development of a nascent digital school structure. Although the K-12 educational organization was encountering implementation angst caused by the disruptive innovation of emerging digital structures, it was apparent that the school district was realigning resources and shifting priorities to support digital teaching and digital learning. Structure, according to Thompson (1961) “refers to the persistent qualities or given elements in the environmental conditions of choice or action which make it possible to

explain and perhaps to predict action" (p. 8). As the traditional organization of brick and mortar teaching and learning blended with the virtual structure of teaching and learning, a hybrid educational organization began to emerge (see Figure 1). The structure for digital teaching and learning is the collective use of software that is supported by servers, routers, wires, and technical knowledge that will "explain and predict the action" of teachers as they teach and students as they learn.

A virtual educational organization is emerging from the traditional bureaucratically arranged organization described by Weber (1921) and Thompson (1961). Weber's description of the 19th century bureaucratically arranged organization has been the standard by which all models and theories of organization have been compared. In general, all organizations follow the maxim that any organization is a social structure "created by individuals to support the collaborative pursuit of specified goals" (Scott, 1998, p. 10). However, from the mid twentieth century to the present the study of organizational characteristics has generated a body of literature and theoretical analyses of organizations as rational, natural, and open with permutations and extensive descriptions that expanded, and further refined, theories of organization as structuralist, contingent, and layered. This case study presents a theoretical description that extends the bureaucratically arranged educational organization to virtual.

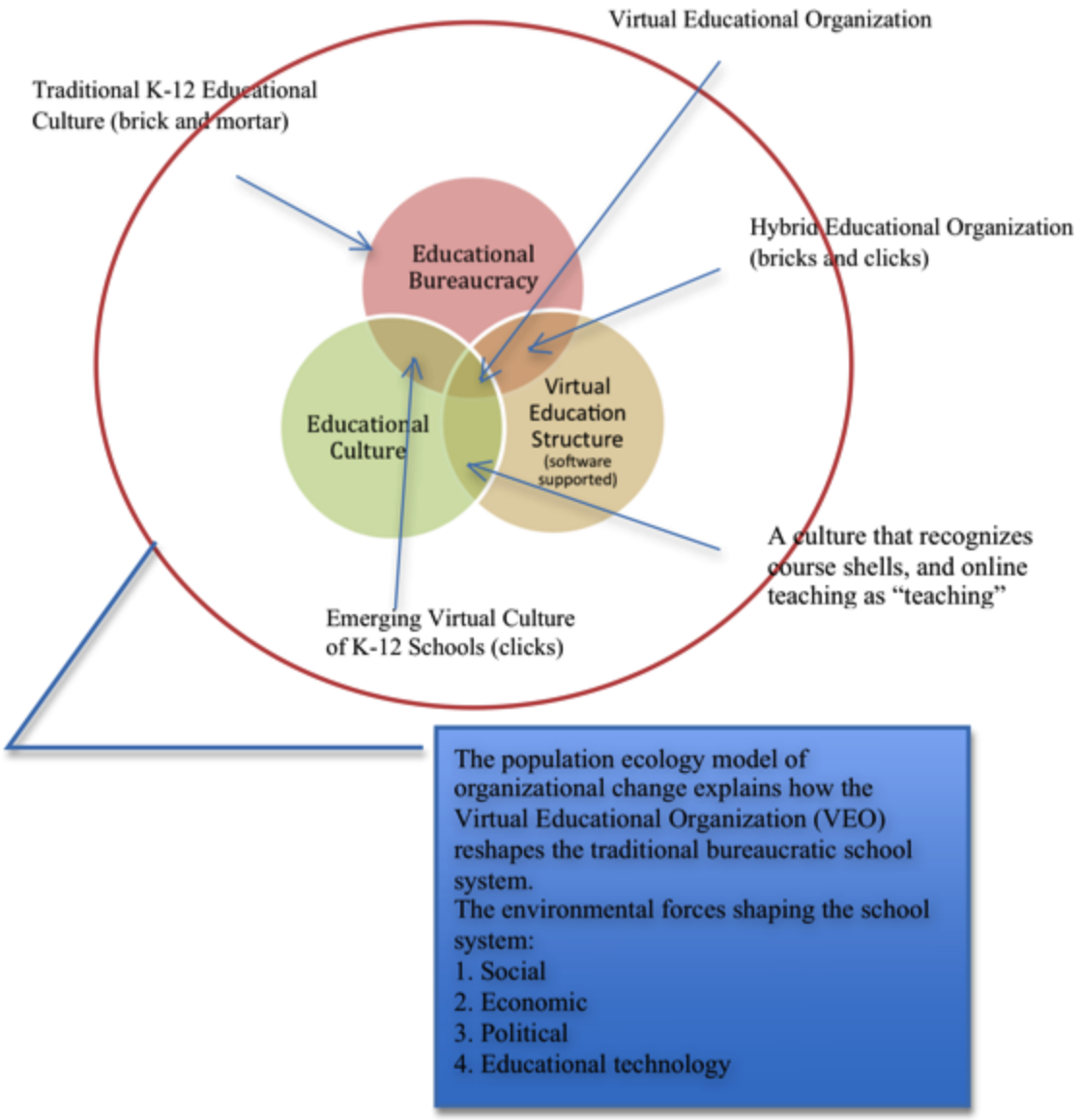
Population Ecology: Technology Shaping Educational Organization

The population ecology model of organizational change explains the external feedback loop of social, political, economic, and, in this case, educational technology pressures reshaping the American educational system. A central theme of this form of organizational change is that "environments differentially select organizations for survival on the basis of fit between organizational forms and environmental characteristics" (Scott, 1998, p. 115). The population ecology model extends the theoretical premise that the virtual educational organization is a more open natural system being shaped by social, economic, political, and educational technology forces that require school systems to "change their characteristics through adaptation over time" (p. 115). Further, a culture is

developing that reflects the growing influence of technology. As Schein (1985) described culture, it is the “emerging assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment” (p. 6). This organization is in the process of changing the cultural norm of teaching and learning by adopting a structure for virtual education.

In this study it appeared that the virtual educational organization was emerging (causing disruption to the bureaucratic organization) as an integrated system within the traditional bureaucratic educational organization. The virtual educational organization was not an emerging entity unto itself but an emerging structure evolving and integrating with the present day K-12 school district.

Figure 1. Virtual Educational Organization (VEO)



The Virtual Educational Organization is a system of education designed around software that will be experienced by the teacher and student as formal structures for teaching and learning. These structures are only now being designed and built by the school district as it adopts the technology and software tools for delivery of learning supported by the educational organization.

Summary

The emerging K-12 educational organization has a virtual structure that includes 1) connectivity to the Internet that expands the idea/definition of classroom. Teaching and learning will be virtual with connectivity to the primary learning organization (which may/may not be the traditional school district); 2) dynamic software to engage, enhance, and guide the student learning experience; 3) integration of software with an individual teacher's own approach and understanding of pedagogy and student learning; 4) an emerging culture that blends virtual learning with the more traditional face-to-face (lecture/discussion) instructional approach.

The adoption of technology in education should be understood as a slow evolution of educational bureaucracy in building capacity for how software will be used in K-12 learning. Technology, and specifically software, is in a formative stage of adoption for constructing virtual organizational structures. From piecing together the evidence of how one school district is moving forward to address teaching and learning within a technology rich system:

1. The software to structure and organize a hybrid digital/brick and mortar educational organization will accelerate the development of a different pedagogy for teaching and a different (more personalized?) form of learning;
2. The slow rate of organizational change is a condition of bureaucracy. Technology adoption by school systems needs to be understood in context to the nature and condition of the educational bureaucracy as it adapts to changes in the external environment.

Christensen et al (2008) claim that by 2019—if one looks at the logarithmic growth of online delivery of the high school curriculum—"50 percent of high school courses will be delivered online. In other words, within a few years, after a long period of incubation, the world is likely to begin flipping rapidly to student-centric online technology" (p. 98). The significance of Christensen's projection is based upon the accelerating acceptance and expansion of the virtual educational delivery system. This school district is evolving from the brick and mortar system of educational delivery to a

blended system of virtual and bureaucratic delivery . . . and provides evidence that Christensen's prediction is on track.

Changes to the current educational system will require the adults who govern and control the system to recast it as a functional, resilient, and flexible form of learning that is up-to-the-challenge of educating every child to a level of quality that is unprecedented in human history. Pink (2005) described the twenty-first century as the rise of the conceptual age in order to create new knowledge to accelerate economic growth and quality of life. As meaningful as learning should be for students, it needs to be as meaningful for the adults involved in the great transition of knowledge transmission during the twenty-first century. The knowledge required for leading and teaching during this transition is about organizing for learning in a way that better serves children and society. The adults of the present day educational system will need to re-conceptualize the present day school system and recast it for a more student-centered form of learning in the twenty-first century. This case study indicates that one district is moving in a more deliberate way to change how it organizes for teaching and learning in an age of technology.

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